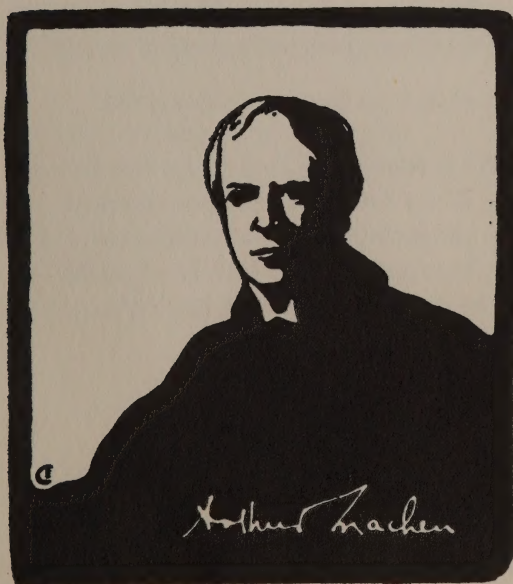


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ARTHUR MACHEN CENTENARY
1863 - 1963

RICHARD MIDDLETON

THE GARDEN OF AVALLAUNIUS
(1906)



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To Arthur Machen

Dawn came to me unconscious. At my feet
The fresh glad earth lay broken for the seed
And my heart sang because the place was sweet,
"If this be life, then it is well to live.
I, being born, have nothing to forgive
In Him who waked me, be this life indeed!"

I set my garden with all pleasant flowers,
Red roses of my blood and lilies white
Of my clean heart, for me there were no hours—
Only a glad eternity of song;
I knowing not that God had wrought such wrong
Who tells his children nothing of the night.

So tended I my flowers, white and red,

Till in His Season, God remembered me
And all my flowers fell desolate and dead,
My earth became the desert sands of drouth,
The songs that had been honey in my mouth
The bitter waters of a Christian sea.



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I sought those others, I that had sufficed
To fill with songs a world they never knew;
They showed the pallid picture of their Christ,
Patience in suffering, framed about with death.
And one poor flower they showed me, being faith,
From whose dim petals never sweetness blew.

But I fled back, and in the tuneful deep
Of old past things I sought my world again,
Glad songs of darkness and sweet flowers of sleep.
And lo! beneath my vision-sun's first beams
A new earth woke, a joyous place of dreams
Fair for the dawn and fresh with dewy rain.

And here I stay where beauty is no sin
And flowers forget the thorns that Jesus wore,
Where my glad mind gather roses in
To bind them into garlands for the child
With singing mouth and great heart undefiled
Who wanders in the garden evermore.

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